

We have seen a great deal of polarization in the media in recent years. Debate and telling both sides of a story is a public service and the airwaves are well used when that happens.

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

We condemned the Soviet Union, and now Iraq, for controlled media. The warnings in such

classics as "Animal
Farm" and "1984"
should give our
leaders and
regulators pause
before allowing
continued, unchecked
consolidation and
abuse of public
airwaves.

Thank you.

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